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Agenda items 36, 37 and 87
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Identical letters dated 15 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group for the month of May 1998, and on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States, I have the honour to bring the following to your attention.

Today, 15 May 1998, the Arab world commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of al-nakba (the catastrophe), the dispossession of the Palestinian people and the uprooting of over 750,000 Palestinians from their land and homes. Since then, and for half a century, the Palestinian people have continued to endure grave injustices and suffer from all forms of persecution and denial of their basic human and national rights. There have been numerous Security Council and General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the injustices that befell upon the Palestinian people and for the achievement of their national and human rights, including their right to self-determination.

One of the most relevant resolutions of this occasion is General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 on the partition of Palestine. That resolution called for the creation of Arab and Jewish States no later than October 1948. On the strength of that resolution Israel declared its establishment 50 years ago. The Arab State called for in the partition resolution has never materialized. Over the past five decades the international

community, through the United Nations, has reaffirmed its call for the implementation of all United Nations resolutions related to the question of Palestine and on many occasions has censured Israel for its violation of relevant United Nations resolutions and international law.

What adds to the bitterness of the occasion is the crime perpetrated by the occupying Israeli army against the Palestinian people during the commemoration of this sad anniversary, which resulted in killing nine Palestinians and injuring hundreds. Furthermore, this anniversary comes at a time when the Middle East peace process is at a dangerous crossroads as a result of the intransigence of the Israeli Government and its defiance of the will of the international community, international law and the efforts of the co-sponsors of the peace process.

It is the duty of the international community to ensure respect for all United Nations resolutions and to exert the necessary effort to implement those resolutions leading to a just resolution of the Palestine question and a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36, 37 and 87, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gaafar M. ALLAGANY
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations
Chairman of the Arab Group